

# WILDLANDS, A PART OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT

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A GOOD environment for man will always include some areas that are wild. Whether man thinks of himself as a descendant from first parents who started life on the earth in a Garden of Eden that was an actual area of pristine Nature or as the beneficiary of an evolution traced back to savage, amphibian, or even earlier conditions, still he knows that home for his ancestors was savage, wild, and intimate with trees and other plants and animals, but without the shelter and protection from the harsh elements of Nature for which he has now sacrificed a companionship with the elemental forces and forms of life and Nature.

An awareness of such a background of inheritance, an intimation of nostalgia for the distant ancestral conditions, and an immediate joy in living and learning that is experienced in the wild and natural areas that remain have given modern men a consciousness of the values of returning to the primitive for recreation, for inspiration, and for knowledge.

Even areas of the wilderness itself have come to be valued *as wilderness*—areas that, in contrast with those parts of the earth's landscape that are dominated by man and his works, are untrammelled by man; areas where man is himself a member of the natural community, a transient whose travels leave only trails.

The earth's wilderness in any cosmol-

ogy is the great mother of resources—man's source of all his materials, as well as his own ancestral home. Out of the wilderness have come man and all that he knows. Out of the wilderness he has fashioned his civilization. It is the raw material of his culture.

It is no wonder then that men sigh for the wilderness as they see it disappearing. It is no wonder that so many respond to a mention of the wilderness with a nostalgia from deep-seated, half recollections of something they want to see again.

Americans know an especially keen poignance as they think of wilderness, for as Americans they have always known something of the wilderness.

To their immediate generations of ancestors the wilderness was all-en-

compassing, and it still persists in remnants, some of magnificent extent.

When the European world of our origins was well settled, even crowded as our ancestors thought, we Americans found a new continent where the wilderness was still pristine. We started all over again. We fashioned the wilderness anew. It refashioned us, too. And this time, before the wilderness was all made over into civilized, mechanized, humanized areas, it was itself valued, and it began to be cherished. The mother of resources was last to be recognized as in need of protection, but in the United States the recognition did come—and it came before the wilderness had all vanished.

The wilderness in America is still living. It is different to us, but it has not vanished. It no longer seems to contain mankind, as outer space does now seem to. We ourselves seem rather to contain the wilderness. The dear Mother who gave us origin, nurtured us—chastised us, too—lives with us now, lives, as we might say, through our care, but still lives.

ONE OF the first Americans to sense the values of wilderness as wilderness and the possibility of its preservation in the public interest—Henry David Thoreau—perceived these values not only as recreational in a common sense but also as profound. "In Wilderness," he wrote, "is the preservation of the World," capitalizing both "Wildness" and "World."

Before the 19th century was half gone, Thoreau had asked for the preservation of wilderness areas "for our own true recreation," and had urged a primitive forest for every town and a committee to see that the beauty of the town received no detriment. He had also interpreted the human need for wilderness.

"The wilderness is near as well as dear to every man," he wrote in 1849 in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*. "Even the oldest villages are indebted to the border of wild wood which

surrounds them, more than to the gardens of men. There is something indescribably inspiring and beautiful in the aspect of the forest skirting and occasionally jutting into the midst of new towns, which, like the sand heaps of fresh fox burrows, have sprung up in their midst. The very uprightness of the pines and maples asserts the ancient rectitude and vigor of nature. Our lives need the relief of such a background, where the pine flourishes and the jay still screams."

In his classic *Walden*, published in 1854, Thoreau predicted that "our village life would stagnate if it were not for the unexplored forests and meadows which surround it."

He went on to exclaim in a rhapsody of understanding:

"We need the tonic of wildness,—to wade sometimes in marshes where the bittern and the meadow-hen lurk, and hear the booming of the snipe; to smell the whispering sedge where only some wilder and more solitary fowl builds her nest, and the mink crawls with its belly close to the ground. At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be infinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable. We can never have enough of nature. We must be refreshed by the sight of inexhaustible vigor, vast and titanic features, the sea-coast with its wrecks, the wilderness with its living and decaying trees, the thundercloud, and the rain which lasts three weeks and produces freshets. We need to witness our own limits transgressed, and some life pasturing freely where we never wander."

ROBERT MARSHALL, who a century after Thoreau, in the 1930's, led a wilderness preservation movement from his position as head of the Division of Lands and Recreation of the Forest Service, knew and expressed values that for him made the wilderness unique esthetically.

"The wilderness," Robert Marshall

wrote, "furnishes the best environment for physical adventure," the lack of which "is responsible for much unhappiness, for a considerable portion of the crime which is so often committed as a means of self expression, and, if we are to believe William James and Bertrand Russell, even for war."

In wilderness Marshall also found "ideal conditions for developing physical hardness" and at the same time "the perfect environment for peacefulness and relaxation."

He found the wilderness "also unique esthetically in that it stimulates not just the sense of sight, as does art, or the sense of sound, as does music, but all of the senses which man has."

"The traveler wandering at evening to the shore of some wilderness lakelet," Marshall wrote, "senses through his sight the pink sunset sky and the delightful pattern which the deep bay makes through the spruce trees which rise from its shores; senses through his hearing the lapping of the water against the rocky shore and the evening song of the thrush; senses through his smell the scent of balsam and the marsh flowers at the water's edge; senses through his touch the gentle wind which blows on his forehead and the softness of the sphagnum beneath his feet."

"The wilderness," testified Marshall, "is all of these senses harmonized with immensity into a form of beauty which to many human beings is the most perfect experience of the earth."

Immensity indeed was for Robert Marshall the wilderness's dominant value.

"All these esthetic values," he said, "are present, but they are blended with the dominant value of being a part of an immensity so great that the human being who looks upon it vanishes into utter insignificance."

On such convictions as these, the forester Robert Marshall based his strenuous and effective efforts for wilderness preservation and his establishment of a trust fund that has succeeded

remarkably in its purpose to increase the knowledge and appreciation of wilderness as a resource of the American people.

NOT ONLY, however, are wilderness values superlative. They are essential. The exquisite is also a requisite. We have a profound, a fundamental need for areas of wilderness—a need that is not only recreational but spiritual, educational, scientific, essential to a true understanding of ourselves, our culture, our own natures, and our place in all Nature.

It is a need that any modern man may know, whether his residence is urban, suburban, or rural.

This need is for areas of the earth within which we are without our mechanisms that make us immediate masters over our environment—areas of wild Nature in which we can sense ourselves as dependent members of the interdependent community of living things that together derive their existence from the sun.

By very definition this wilderness is a need. The idea of wilderness as an area without man's influence is man's own concept. Its values are human values. Its preservation is a purpose that arises out of man's own sense of his fundamental needs, an awareness that comes only when man's communities of dwelling places and his farmlands have become so urban, suburban, mechanically rural that man himself feels crowded, regimented, and in all his mastery the tool of his own inventions.

It is not surprising that recreational values generally are understood as representing the dominant importance of wilderness in our modern civilization. Only in a society that produces the erosion of human beings, the wearing away of soul and body and spirit that is so familiar in modern circumstances, does the concept of recreation appear.

Wilderness is the antithesis of all that produces the conditions that recreation remedies. It provides the kind of rec-

reaction most needed by the increasingly large numbers who now seek wilderness. It affords a background for the kind of outdoor recreation for which conveniences and accommodations are provided—the frontier where those who do not wish to experience the rigors of wilderness living and travel may still know in some degree the tonic benefits of its wildness.

Some of the benefits of wildness, fortunately, are realized in areas that are not wilderness—areas that are not large enough to be wilderness or that are modified by timber cutting, road-building, dwelling places, or other intrusions that destroy wilderness yet leave areas where the quality of wildness lives on.

“Wildness” and “wilderness” are common terms in their distinguishing nature, yet not synonymous.

Wildness is a quality. Wilderness is an area of certain character.

Wildness is the essence of wilderness, yet it characterizes also that which is not wilderness, including many natural and wildland areas that are not wilderness.

Wildness is the quality of that which is fresh and independently vital, undomesticated, uncontrolled, although close to and even surrounded by man's civilization.

The house cat, in its indoor feline independence and its untrammelled caterwauling outdoors at night, maintains its essence of wildness despite its domestic surroundings.

Wilderness is something more than wildness, yet not comprehensive of all wildness.

It is indeed not only for absolute wilderness that modern men and women and their adventurous children leave the city in a return to wildness.

What they seek is the quality of wildness—the wildness in which Thoreau saw the preservation of the world.

They seek and find this quality of environment in many of the areas near at hand—areas not truly wilderness though more or less free from the trammels of man's domesticating genius.

We call the areas within which the quality of wildness is present and perceptible, even though modified by other qualities, “the wildlands.” So distinctive are these areas in the midst of our civilized, domesticated landscape that they are designated by this unit term, the one word, “wildlands”—not simply lands that are wild but areas that are distinctive, the wildlands.

Arthur H. Carhart, a landscape architect and land use planner with long experience in wild country, has applied to the consideration of conflicting uses of wildlands the zoning skills that have become so effectual in dealing with similar conflicts for the use of areas within our cities.

In a book, *Planning for America's Wildlands*, Mr. Carhart in 1961 proposed an orderliness in wildlands management to meet all needs reasonably and at the same time protect in various zones the quality of wildness and provide also for the preservation of the ultimate areas of wilderness.

As one of his urban colleagues might view a well-planned city from the Residential Zone A, Mr. Carhart looks out from the heart of the true wilderness toward, and through, zones of increasing use for purposes that more and more modify the natural scene.

The B Zone of our wildlands, which he calls “Wilderness Buffer,” and the C Zone, designated “Primitive Camping,” have a closeness to the Wilderness Zone A that is like the approaches of the B and C Zones in city planning to the ideal protected in Residential A.

D, E, F, and G Zones encompass all the other wildlands, even to the edge of the city, or perhaps as wildland “islands” in the parks of the city itself. (These, in Mr. Carhart's nomenclature, are the Dude Ranch Zone, the Summer Home-Lodge-Group Camp Zone, Intermediate Resort and Camp Zone, and the Semisuburban Zone.)

“Physically,” says Mr. Carhart, “wildlands begin wherever we face away from the man-dominated landscape of farm, town, city, or any landscape grossly modified by human

occupancy maintained for any purposes. From this spot the wildlands extend in graduated degrees of lessening human influence in the natural landscape, outward, to reach their type climax in the wilderness. Thus the term 'wildlands' is more than a synonym for the term 'wilderness'; wildlands are the wilderness plus all the surrounding lands that lie between genuine wilderness, as exemplified by the totally natural landscape, and those landscapes where man's control and manipulations are immediately evident."

ESPECIALLY NOTABLE among or within the wildlands are the natural areas set aside for scientific purposes. These are areas of widely varying sizes, areas that would occur in any of the zones which Arthur Carhart has visualized. They are sections not only within which natural conditions may be studied but also areas that may themselves be used as "check" zones in connection with studies of management practices. Their distinctive value is in their freedom from human manipulation and modification.

"We take it for granted," Luna B. Leopold, Chief of the Geological Survey's Water Division, told the Sixth Biennial Wilderness Conference in San Francisco in 1959, "that there is some social gain in the erection and maintenance of a museum of fine arts, a museum of natural history, or even a historical museum. Sooner or later we ought to be mature enough to extend this concept to another kind of museum, one which you might call the museum of land types, consisting of samples as uninfluenced as possible by man."

It may be that the scientific values will come to be considered the greatest of all the values of wilderness and wildland natural areas.

Scientific values of wildlands are similar to those of historical importance in depending on the preservation of areas as they existed, and exist, without the influences of modern man,

pieces of the long ago that we still have with us.

Scientific and historical values are related also to the study and observation that are essentially educational in their purpose. Wildlands, including the smaller natural areas and also the extensive wilderness, should be preserved for the sake of the field study that they make possible for students, generation after generation. They serve this purpose for the summer camps of youth organizations, for field stations of college summer school classes, and also for the more advanced excursions of graduate students.

Perhaps the most profound of all wilderness values in the modern world is an educational value.

As the so-called conquest of Nature has progressed, men and women—separated by their civilization from the life community of their origin—have become less and less aware of their dependence on other forms of life and more and more misled into a sense of self-sufficiency and into a disregard of their interdependence with other forms of life.

In the areas of wilderness that are still relatively unmodified by man, it is possible for a human being, adult or child, to sense and see his own humble, dependent relationship to other creatures, plant and animal.

In and from these areas are the opportunities for gaining an understanding of our past, ourselves, and our world, which will enable us to enjoy the conveniences and liberties of our urbanized, industrialized, mechanized civilization and yet not sacrifice an awareness of our human existence as spiritual creatures nurtured and sustained by and from the great community of life that comprises the wildness of the universe, of which we ourselves are a part.

Paradoxically, the wilderness which thus teaches modern man his dependence on the whole community of life also can teach him a needed personal independence—an ability to care for himself, to carry his own burdens, to

provide his own fuel, prepare his own food, furnish his own shelter, make his own bed, and even transport himself by walking.

WITH THESE LESSONS comes the understanding that physical, psychic, and spiritual human needs are such that wilderness recreation should always be available and, in fact, should be enjoyed to a much greater extent than it now is.

Wilderness vacations have overtones that make them more than narrowly recreational. They are more likely to be joyous than merry, more refreshing than exciting, more engrossing than diverting. Their typical rewards are satisfactions.

Philosophers of education who describe their goals in such terms as "life adjustment" and "personality development" may find in the wilderness a most valuable resource where recreation becomes profoundly educational.

In a culture like that which we call modern, we can be sure that it will be increasingly important for students, of the present and of future generations, to know what the wilderness has to teach—through their own experiences; through educators who are informed and corrected by wilderness experiences; and through photographs, paintings, writings, and other educational and informational materials with a validity insured by a still living wilderness.

As long as wilderness areas exist in reality, providing actual resorts for human beings, giving a sense of actuality to pictorial and literary representations of the wilderness, and affording the scenes for further research, so long will the safeguards against an urban, industrial, mechanized ignorance of the facts of human life be effective.

To know the quality of wildness in the wilderness or even in lesser wildlands is to have a portion of the vitaminlike essentials without which mankind weakens into the want that comes with a bread-alone existence.

IT IS FORTUNATE that our bounty of land and water resources is so great that we can have our natural areas of wildland, including our great remaining stretches of wilderness, without sacrificing the material benefits derived from the products of land and water areas exploited for commodities.

We can, for example, have our forest products and wilderness, too, although, of course, we cannot take the products from places cherished as wilderness.

We need commodities that only the forest provides. We need also the undeveloped, unexploited areas of forest wilderness.

Just as man cannot live by bread alone, though the very statement recognizes bread as essential, so we cannot afford to use the forests for products only, though we recognize clearly that forest products are essential to us.

The needs are not single or simple. They are many and complex—multiple.

Indeed, the principle of multiple use of resources is a remarkably apt one for application in a program for wildland preservation.

Used by some especially interested groups and individuals as a euphemism to describe programs that exclude wilderness preservation, the term "multiple use" has had wide publicity in controversy as an ideal opposed to preservation of areas. Those who resist a policy or program that would preserve an area which they may wish to exploit for commodities (or think they or their successors might so wish to exploit at some possible future time) have idealized their own single purposes with a "multiple-use" label.

This has been notable not only in arguments advanced during controversies but also in formal nomenclatures. Thus the vice president of a paper company speaks publicly in New England as director of the Association for the Multiple Use of Maine Timberland, and a lumber company's managing forester in Idaho speaks as chairman of the Inland Empire Multiple Use Committee.

This polemic use of the term to ideal-

ize commercial purposes that are in conflict with wilderness preservation proposals has confused some into concluding that such proposals are inconsistent with the multiple-use principle.

The truth is to the contrary.

Not only is wildlands preservation consistent with the multiple-use principle. The best apparent hope for success in the preservation of such areas, including wilderness, is indeed actually in application of the multiple-use principle. This is particularly true in areas in public ownership.

The Forest Service has defined multiple use as that combination of uses of any area that is best suited to public needs.

The Multiple Use Act of 1960—Public Law 517 of the 86th Congress—which declared, "The establishment and maintenance of areas of wilderness are consistent with the purposes and provisions of this Act"—defined the term as follows:

"'Multiple Use' means: The management of all the various renewable surface resources of the national forests so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the needs of the American people; making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; that some land will be used for less than all of the resources; and harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources, each with the other, without impairment of the productivity of the land, with consideration being given to the relative values of the various resources, and not necessarily the combination of uses that will give the greatest dollar return or the greatest unit output."

"The combination that will best meet the needs of the American people . . . not necessarily the combination of uses that will give the greatest dollar return or the greatest unit output" is a combination that

within many forests and in many areas provides for wildland preservation.

Under such provisions, the designation within our forest lands of some areas as wilderness is obviously sound multiple use, and within the areas that are designated as wilderness there are various combinations that are consistent with preservation of the wilderness character of the areas.

Watershed protection, for example, is a most important use of nearly all our areas of wilderness—so important in some that recreational uses may be prohibited during dry seasons when the fire hazard from campfires would jeopardize the vegetation and soils on which watershed protection is dependent.

Research and study uses of areas to realize their scientific values are likewise among the multiple uses in a wilderness combination.

Camping, fishing, hunting, picture taking, and other recreational uses are of dominant importance from the viewpoint of many, and these uses can be as consistent with wilderness preservation as they are in some respects dependent on areas of wilderness.

Only those uses are excluded from a wilderness combination that would destroy an area's wilderness character—timber cutting, roadbuilding, and resort operation, for example.

Both in the broad, overall selection of a reasonable portion of our land and also in provision for the use of the specific areas classified for preservation there is a harmony with the multiple-use principle.

Application of the multiple-use principle will facilitate wildlands preservation.

The principle is important to wilderness and other wildlands preservation because the areas to be preserved are within areas already devoted to some other purpose and the lateness in our history of land use would make difficult indeed the realization of a category of lands for wildland use only—the single purpose posed by the would-be exploiters who consider the production of

commercial commodities the essential multiple-use nucleus.

The fact that there still are wildlands, even areas of wilderness, within lands devoted primarily to various other uses than wildland preservation indicates that such preservation is compatible with various uses of the land. To realize the preservation in perpetuity it is necessary only to manage the lands for other purposes in such a way as continuously to preserve the wildlands character. The multiple-use principle provides well for meeting such a need.

It seems apparent that no land within the United States is to be left unused. There is no hope, thus, on this assumption, that wildlands will persist by escaping utilization by man. Areas to be preserved by man will have to be used by him positively, to meet the needs for wildlands that he recognizes—managed to be left unmanaged.

Furthermore, with increasing pressures on limited land areas it becomes more and more important to use all available land for all recognized needs. Wildland preservation must be an aspect of a total program that meets all needs.

To preserve some areas free from timber cutting will require adequate timber production on other areas. Preserving natural areas undeveloped with recreation facilities will require adequate provision of developed areas with the access and facilities needed by the large numbers seeking outdoor recreation with conveniences.

The multiple use of the total land resource must be so planned and managed as to include the preservation of wildland, if it is to be complete.

MOST OF THE wilderness still remaining within the United States is in Federal ownership.

Nearly 15 million acres within national forests outside Alaska have been designated administratively for preservation as wilderness in 84 units, which vary in size from a little more than 5 thousand acres to more than 1.2 mil-

lion acres. Perhaps, including Alaska, an additional 15 million acres within the national forests would qualify for such designation but for conflicting potential uses. Including these *de facto* areas, there actually are thus some 30 million acres in the national forests.

Within some 49 areas in the national park system there are about 20 million acres of wilderness, including the areas in Alaska and Hawaii and omitting 2 million acres as the estimated total area within the 49 areas involved in roads and facilities for visitors.

National wildlife refuges and ranges include 23 units, which contain nearly 25 million acres of wilderness, about 19 million of which are in Alaska.

Areas administered by the Bureau of Land Management and some other agencies may bring to 80 million acres the total of the wilderness in Federal ownership, most of it in Alaska and the Western States.

In the aggregate, some 3 million acres of wilderness in a dozen or so separate areas are being preserved by the States. The largest State total is in New York's total of nearly 2.5 million acres in the forest preserve within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. More than 200 thousand acres are in the Katahdin wilderness of Baxter State Park in Maine.

Private holdings within the United States also include significant areas—great stretches, for example, of the paper companies' 1,800,000 acres in Allagash country in Maine.

No wilderness inventory has ever been made of the entire United States. The total area of land in a wilderness condition in 1963 may be estimated at less than 90 million acres, out of our total land area of more than 2.3 billion acres.

The Wilderness Act passed by the United States Senate in 1961 specified for consideration, as units of a proposed National Wilderness Preservation System, Federal areas that in the aggregate total some 62 million acres, of which the measure's sponsor, Senator Clinton P. Anderson, estimated

between 35 and 45 million acres would survive the review program provided for in the act and come to constitute the Nation's wilderness resource.

No ESTIMATES are available or apparently possible for the number or the average or aggregate sizes of other wildland areas, but it seems clear to those who value such areas that they are already too few, too small, and increasingly subject to pressures that threaten their natural conditions.

Anyone who has custody over any area of wildland should preserve it if at all possible in meeting other needs, so precious and scarce are such areas becoming.

Throughout the land, whether in urban, rural, or wildland surroundings, the continued existence of areas in unspoiled natural condition must be the result of deliberate, determined action. No extensive areas of wilderness will long survive except as they are positively valued as wilderness and deliberately so preserved. Nor will natural conditions prevail within city and suburban parks or indeed in even the rural landscape unless the quality of wildness is adequately appreciated before it has vanished and protected by whatever governmental unit has custody.

Fortunately, the human need for experiencing natural surroundings has been felt so extensively and understood so well that there is reasonable hope that some of the same circumstances which threaten such surroundings will help in realizing the developments that will preserve them.

The result has been not only numerous and increasingly serious threats to the wilderness that yet remains, but at the same time a growing demand for wilderness as a refuge from the pressures and distractions of our urbanized, mechanized environment.

This interest has found expression also in a concern for the areas, though smaller, that are more numerous, often nearer home, and, though in private ownership, still available as an impor-

tant part of the whole wildland heritage that we enjoy.

The variety and extent of available areas can still match the multiplicity and degree of uses that are desired.

It is still possible to see such a balance continued indefinitely—a challenge not only to land planners but also to all citizens who participate in the formulation of public policy and the establishment and maintenance of programs.

For it must be emphasized that no areas of wilderness will persist except as they are designated for preservation as such and are so protected. Nor will any natural area or other wildland tract retain its quality of wildness except as this is deliberately valued and safeguarded by excluding the developments that would sacrifice its wild character.

TO BE REALIZED in our culture, wildlands preservation must be the result of a deliberate purpose, implemented through policies and programs that can be expected to endure.

If private lands are to be handled and bequeathed as wildlands they must be preserved through dedications that have legal force and are perpetual, or the time will surely come when their wilderness character will be lost.

A sound and adequate total policy and program of land use must provide for so handling those areas devoted to production and development as to permit also the preservation of the wildness within the maximum possible number of areas of maximum possible size in their natural condition.

A good environment for man will always include some areas that are wild.

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